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To: Microsoft ATR
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Subject: Microsoft Settlement

Microsoft's attitude seems to be like that of an old Imperialist justifying England's Colonial Expansion.

"Sure, we might have enslaved a few million, yes we may have held a few economies back and stolen other countries resources to benefit our own so that we didn't have to work too hard, but he, at least we can all speak English, right?"

Microsoft program and OS writers have proved themselves lazy and incompetent. Having done good some initial work on a GUI, they then generated feature-rich and security poor software over the past seven years, with a disastrous EULA, all in the name of screwing more money out of customers.

Was there a need for WinXP or Me so soon after Win2K? No. There was a need for a secure Win2K, with no Internet Explorer code in the OS code AT ALL!!!

Most of the hacking exploits that Microsoft OSes are prone to are enabled by IIS server code or Internet Explorer Code or simply crappy application code handling of buffer overflows or the damned "interoperability" between Outlook/Outlook Express and other proggies.

Microsoft wanted the Internet to itself so it wasted Netscape. It wants its users to remain clueless so it made things so easy that every two-bit hacker could exploit holes in its badly written OS and applications code. It wants .Net enabled on all systems so it can "rent" applications and "look after" other peoples information [the Hotmail EULA put paid to that...]

Integration of Server and IE code into the OS doesn't just bring the internet to your fingertips, it brings every malicious cracker to your hard drive! Leasing applications and storing information using the internet means the crackers don't even have to get into your hard drive, just the relevant microsoft server, and we've all seen how secure Microsoft are in the last twelve months!

Microsofts quest for domination has exposed private and public users and government departments the world over to using insecure installations for sensitive data.

Not only is the Microsoft Settlement flawed, it is illegal in my opinion, the DoJ failing to discharge its duty to the benefit of all consumers which is to encourage free trade and competition. A judgement

which limits Microsoft to providing ONLY the Operating System [OS] AND which prevents any sister company the DoJ might set up to produce applications benefitting unfairly from knowledge of the source code is what it needed.

That way companies making sucessfully products such as browsers might flourish once again.

But even if the DoJ do nothing, Microsoft's halcyon days are numbered. Apple sought market exclusivity and profiteering by sticking to the hardware like glue. Microsoft has tried to achive the same thing by bullying and sticking to the Operating System like glue. Nor will Microsoft's quest to dominate the Net last for too long, I'm afraid.

Nor will any restrictive approach will work, long term. Open Source and the GPL are here to stay.

Yes, ironically I'm using a Microsoft Operating system with an old version of Netscape to running on it to send this message. I will probably invest in Win2K for a while, but this year makes the changeover to Linux, prolly either SuSE or Mandrake [or both!] and I don't expect to be looking back over my shoulder too often. Star Office /Open Office, with Opera as a browser, here I come!

Michael O'Neill.